

Oral substitution therapy for opioid addicts especially for intravenous drug users was started in central jail in Nov. 2007. It has shown good results in improving physical and mental health, psycho-social functioning and normalizing the lives of HIV infected drug users. Further, this has been linked to OST centres run by AIIMS. So that inmates on OST after release can continue their treatment. Oral substitution therapy is known to be effective in not only reducing risk of HIV infection, improving physical and mental health, reducing mortality, improving psycho-social functioning reducing criminality and stabilizing and normalizing the lives of drugs users.

#### **Shortage of doctors in rural areas**

2038. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) has failed to achieve its target due to shortage of doctors in the rural areas;
- (b) if so, the details thereof including the targets fixed under the scheme;
- (c) whether a large number of sanctioned posts of specialized doctors are also lying vacant;
- (d) if so, the details thereof;
- (e) the steps taken/proposed to be taken to fill up the vacant posts; and
- (f) the manner by which the various targets are sought to be achieved keeping in view the vacant posts of the specialized doctors?

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI GHULAM NABI AZAD): (a) No.

(b) Question does not arise in view of (a) above.

(c) Yes.

(d) As per the Bulletin on Rural Health Statistics in India updated upto March, 2008, 4068 posts of specialists are lying vacant at Community Health Centre across the country.

(e) State government appoint doctors against sanctioned posts. They have been directed to fill up existing vacancies.

(f) The regular staff is being appointed by the State Governments, However, to bridge the gap between the required and existing staff, the staff is being appointed on contract basis under National Rural Health Mission [NRHM], by the States. As reported by State/UT Governments [updated upto Jan, 2010] a total of 2460 Specialists at Community Health Centres, 4613 Specialists at levels other than Community Health Centres, and 8624 GDMOs at various levels have also been engaged on contract under NRHM.